

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: MARR, SP

SUBJ: BASE NEGOTIATIONS: SPECULATION AND COMMENTARY
FOLLOWING SEVENTH ROUND

REF: MADRID 4674

1. LOCAL PRESS HAS COMMENTED ON REPORT IN "YA". (INDEPENDENT)
JULY 5 FROM NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT REFERRING TO ALLEGED
LIST OF ARMS REQUESTED BY SPAIN TOTALING \$1.5 BILLION.
ACCORDING TO COMMENTATOR IN "INFORMACIONES" (INDEPENDENT)
LIST WOULD NOT BE TOO EXTENSIVE CONSIDERING STRATEGIC
CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE OVER PAST YEARS IN MED WITH
EXPANSION OF SOVIET FLEET, RADICALIZATION OF POLICIES OF
SOME LITTORAL COUNTRIES AND PORTUGUESE GOVT'S NEW POSITION
ON USE OF AZORES BASE WHICH HAVE MADE SPAIN'S STRATEGIC
IMPORTANCE ALL THATMORE APPARENT. ACCORDING TO COMMENTARY
SUPPLIED BY NEWS AGENCY PYRESA (NATIONAL MOVEMENT) FIGURE
OF \$1.5 BILLION WAS FLOATED AS TRIAL BALLOON IN WASHINGTON
TO TEST REACTION IN MADRID. "ARRIBA" (NATIONAL MOVEMENT)
AND "ABC" (MONARCHIST) PUBLISHED COMMENTARY JUL 8 STATING
THAT OFFICIAL SOURCES IN GOVT DENIED REPORTS OF DISCUSSION
OF PRICE TAG FOR LIST OF ARMS REQUESTED BY GOS AND REPORT
MADE BY CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR CORRESPONDENT IN MADRID
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THAT U.S. WOULD SUPPLY SPAIN WITH NUCLEAR ARMS.

2. "ARRIBA" ALSO PUBLISHED JULY 8 ANSWERS FROM TWO WELL-KNOWN PUBLIC FIGURES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT BASE TALKS AND AFC. JOSE MARIA ARMERO, PRESIDENT OF "EUROPA PRESS AGENCY", SAID MAJORITY OF SPANIARDS ARE PRO-AMERICAN BUT ARE DISSATISFIED WITH U.S. POLICY AND DO NOT FAVOR PERMANENCE OF BASES. CONDITIONS UNDER AFC HAVE TO BE MODIFIED, HE SAID, AND FORMAL TREATY WITH DEFENSE GUARANTEES SHOULD BE CONCLUDED. ARMERO SAID IT WAS NOT INDESPENSABLE TO SIGN AGREEMENTS IF CONDITIONS WERE UNACCEPTABLE; IT WAS POSSIBLE TO HAVE DEFENSE AGREEMENTS WITHOUT NEED FOR U.S. BASES "JUST AS FRANCE HAS DONE WITH NATO". ECONOMIC COMPENSATIONS MISSED THE POINT, ACCORDING TO ARMERO, WHO BELIEVES THAT THEY ONLY MAKE SPAIN LOOK LIKE AN UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRY, POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS HAD THE PRIMACY AND THESE HAD TO BE TREATED IN THE MOST FORMAL MANNER POSSIBLE.

3. IN HIS REPLIES, FORMER MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM BLANCO TOBIO REMINDED SPANIARDS THAT THEY COULD ONLY EXPECT THE POSSIBLE AND THAT U.S. HAD CONSIDERABLY LOWERED THE PLATEAU OF FOREIGN COMMITMENTS. ALTHOUGH U.S. INFLUENCE IN EUROPE HAS DECLINED, HE OBSERVED, IT WAS STILL POLITICALLY IMPORTANT TO SPAIN. WITHOUT BELONGING TO MILITARY ALLIANCE, WITH IBERIAN PACT WITH PORTUGAL ON VERGE OF REVISION, AND WITH LAPSED AGREEMENT WITH U.S., SPAIN WOULD RUN MAXIMUM RISK PRECISELY AT CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO. ON OTHER HAND, BLANCO SAID THAT SPANISH PEOPLE WERE OPPOSED TO U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE PARTLY BECAUSE U.S. IS NO LONGER POPULAR IN WORLD, PARTLY BECAUSE OF DECLINE IN CONSCIOUSNESS OF FOREIGN DANGER, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF OBJECTIONS TO FOREIGN TROOPS IN SPAIN.

4. LEAD EDITORIAL IN "YA" JULY 6 CRITICIZES GOS FOR "HERMETISM" WITH INFO ON COURSE OF BILATERAL TALKS, ADDING THAT SPANISH PEOPLE AND PRESS EXPECT GOVT TO KEEP THEM INFORMED ON SUCH IMPORTANT ISSUES. "YA" ALLEGES THAT SOME TERMS OF NEW AGREEMENT HAVE ALREADY BEEN SETTLED, BUT GOS ITSELF HAS OBJECTED TO "STINGINESS" OF U.S., ALLOF UNCLASSIFIED

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WHICH AUGMENTS UNEASINESS AND DISCOURAGEMENT. EDITORIAL STATES THAT, OWING SUSPICIONS STEMMING FROM U.S. POSTURE ON SAHARA ISSUE, SPANIARDS SHOULD BE INFORMED HOW FAR U.S. IS PREPARED TO GO IN BACKING SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY.

5. COMMENT: MOST EDITORIAL COMMENT CONTINUES TO EMPHASIZE NEED FOR NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND USA.
STABLER

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